

**BEFORE**  
**THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF**  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**DOCKET NO. 2010-21-C**

IN RE:

Application of Cricket Communications,  
Inc. for designation as an Eligible  
Telecommunications Carrier pursuant  
to Section 214(e)(2) of the  
Communications Act

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF**  
**JULIE S. BUECHLER**

**Q. WOULD YOU PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS?**

A. Yes. My name is Julie S. Buechler and my business address is 5887 Copley Drive, San Diego, California, 92111.

**Q. WHERE ARE YOU EMPLOYED?**

A. I am employed by Cricket Communications, Inc., which I will refer to as "Cricket" in the rest of my testimony.

**Q. WHAT POSITION DO YOU HOLD WITH YOUR EMPLOYER?**

A. I am the Manager of Government Programs and Business Development.

**Q. WHAT IS YOUR EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND?**

A. I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from San Diego State University and my Juris Doctor degree from the Thomas Jefferson School of Law. I have been a member of the California Bar Association since 1995. I was engaged in the private practice of law for nine (9) years, most recently with the law firm of Bobbitt, Pinckard & Fields in San Diego, where my practice focused primarily on

1 representation of law enforcement personnel in both administrative and judicial  
2 forums. I assumed my current position with Cricket Communications, Inc. in 2009.

3 **Q. WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES WITH CRICKET?**

4 A. My current position involves oversight of Cricket's effort to implement lifeline and  
5 link-up service availability to eligible customers in all of our markets nationwide through  
6 the processes required for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier, or ETC,  
7 receiving low income only support from the federal Universal Service Fund or "FUSF."  
8 When and as such designations are obtained, I am also responsible for working with the  
9 Universal Service Administrative Company, or USAC, with respect to compliance and  
10 reimbursement matters.

11 **Q. WOULD YOU PLEASE BRIEFLY DESCRIBE CRICKET AND ITS**  
12 **OPERATIONS?**

13 A. Yes. Cricket is a national provider of wireless communications services, both voice and  
14 broadband, operating in thirty four states and serving approximately four million five  
15 hundred thousand customers. Cricket provides high-value wireless services to a young,  
16 and ethnically diverse customer base with unlimited access to wireless voice and data  
17 services for a flat rate without requiring a fixed-term contract.

18 **Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY IN THIS PROCEEDING?**

19 A. The purpose of my testimony is to demonstrate that Cricket satisfies the requirements for  
20 designation as an ETC in the State of South Carolina within the areas proposed in its  
21 application and that the granting of this designation is in the public interest.

1 **Q. WOULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE CRICKET'S WIRELESS OPERATIONS IN**  
2 **SOUTH CAROLINA?**

3 A. Yes. Cricket provides advance wireless service, or "AWS", using its own facilities  
4 within Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Lancaster and York counties pursuant  
5 to authorizations issued to it by the Federal Communications Commission, or "FCC."  
6 Cricket has been providing these services since 2000. In addition, Cricket also  
7 provides commercial mobile radio service, or "CMRS", using its own facilities in certain  
8 portions of Beaufort, Hampton and Jasper counties; as the Commission is aware, Cricket  
9 has already been designated an ETC in these three counties in Docket Number 2003-227-  
10 C and currently receives both high-cost and low-income support from the FUSF as a  
11 result of that designation.

12 **Q. IS CRICKET SEEKING HIGH COST SUPPORT FOR THE ADVANCED**  
13 **WIRELESS SERVICES IT PROVIDES IN THE SIX COUNTIES THAT ARE**  
14 **THE SUBJECT OF THIS APPLICATION?**

15 A. No, it is not. Cricket is only seeking in this proceeding ETC designation for the purpose  
16 of receiving low-income support from the FUSF.

17 **Q. WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATION AS AN ETC?**

18 A. To become designated as an ETC, a carrier must be a common carrier, capable of and  
19 committed to offering specified supported services either through its own facilities or a  
20 combination of its own facilities and resold facilities, advertise these services, and  
21 describe in detail the geographic service area for which it seeks designation. In addition,  
22 where an applicant seeks designation in areas served by a rural local exchange telephone

1 company, or "LEC", the designation must be consistent with the public interest. If  
2 consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity, the Commission shall  
3 designate additional ETCs in areas served by non-rural incumbent LECs, or "ILECs".

4 **Q. IS CRICKET A COMMON CARRIER IN THE AREAS FOR WHICH IT SEEKS**  
5 **DESIGNATION IN THIS PROCEEDING?**

6 A. Yes. The Company is authorized by the FCC to provide AWS pursuant to the licenses  
7 described in its application and is therefore a carrier recognized under 47 USC §214(e) as  
8 eligible for ETC designation.

9 **Q. YOU MENTIONED SUPPORTED SERVICES THAT CRICKET MUST**  
10 **COMMIT TO OFFERING; WHAT ARE THESE SERVICES?**

11 A. Under Commission Regulation 103-690.C, Cricket must commit to offering the nine  
12 services set forth in FCC Rule 54.101(a)(1-9). These services are (1) voice grade access  
13 to the public switched telephone network or "PSTN", (2) local usage, (3) dual tone multi-  
14 frequency signaling, also known as "DTMF", or its functional equivalent, (4) single party  
15 service or its equivalent, (5) access to emergency services, (6) access to operator services,  
16 (7) access to interexchange service, (8) access to directory assistance and (9) toll  
17 limitation for qualifying low-income consumers.

18 **Q. HOW WILL CRICKET PROVIDE THESE SERVICES?**

19 A. These nine supported services will be provided in the following manner:

20 Voice Grade Access to the PSTN

1 Cricket will meet this requirement by making available to customers voice grade access  
2 using FCC prescribed bandwidth which will include signaling that a customer seeks to  
3 place a call or that a call is incoming via interconnection arrangements with LECs.

#### 4 Local Usage

5 As described in our application, Cricket offers a number of local usage plans which we  
6 believe are comparable to those of incumbent LECs in the proposed designation area.  
7 Although the FCC has not defined what constitutes a comparable local usage plan,  
8 Cricket will comply with any applicable minimum local usage requirements which  
9 may be adopted by the FCC as contemplated under 47 CFR §54.202(a)(4). All Cricket  
10 plans have unlimited local and extended area calling beginning at \$30 per month. Thus,  
11 any Cricket customer with the basic \$30 plan can make local in any of the Cricket  
12 service areas without additional charge. Thus, for example, a Cricket customer in  
13 Charleston can go to Rock Hill and make a local call in Rock Hill call at no additional  
14 charge. This is a superior product to traditional landline local calling given the  
15 geographical constraints on LEC local calling. Further, when Lifeline credits are applied,  
16 this extended local calling area service will cost only \$16.50, which is a comparable rate  
17 with local calling plans of LECs which have a smaller calling area. And, since the filing  
18 of our application, Cricket has introduced new rate plans, all of which now include  
19 unlimited local and long distance calling. This applies even to our lowest rate plan, which  
20 is \$30 per month. I have attached as JSB Direct Exhibit 1 a description of these new  
21 calling plans.

#### 22 Dual tone multi-frequency ("DTMF") signaling or equivalent

1 Cricket provides a method of signaling that facilitates the transportation of call set-up and  
2 call detail information through the use of out-of-band digital signaling and in-band multi-  
3 frequency signaling that is the functional equivalent to DTMF signaling, in accordance  
4 with the FCC's requirements.

5 Single-party service or equivalent

6 Cricket allows a wireless subscriber use of a dedicated message path for the length of a  
7 particular transmission by providing a dedicated message path for the length of a users'  
8 wireless transmission.

9 Access to emergency services

10 Cricket currently provides its customers with access to emergency services through  
11 911 dialing throughout the proposed designation area. Where a public safety answering  
12 point ("PSAP") has enhanced 911 capability, Cricket also delivers automatic numbering  
13 information ("ANI") and automatic location information ("ALI"). Further, Cricket pays  
14 all applicable E-911 fees in a timely manner.

15 Access to operator services

16 Cricket provides access to automatic and live assistance for subscribers to arrange for  
17 billing or completion of a telephone call.

18 Access to interexchange service

19 Cricket makes interexchange or toll call capability available to subscribers through  
20 interconnection agreements with interexchange carriers ("IXCs"). With our new rate  
21 plans, interexchange calls are unlimited (i.e., they can be made for no additional charge  
22 with all outgoing call minutes being treated the same) for all of our customers.

Moreover, our customers are able to reach an IXC of choice by having money in their flex buckets.

Access to directory assistance

Cricket subscribers are provided access to directory assistance by dialing either "411" or "Area Code + 555-1212".

Toll limitation for qualifying low-income consumers

If its application is granted, Cricket will participate in the Lifeline and Link Up programs for qualifying low-income customers. The Lifeline calling plans that Cricket intends to offer do not distinguish between local and toll calls. If for any reason Cricket changes that offer, it will meet the toll limitation requirement by providing toll blocking.

**Q. ARE THE SUPPORTED SERVICES TO BE OFFERED USING CRICKET'S OWN FACILITIES OR THROUGH A COMBINATION OF ITS OWN FACILITIES AND RESOLD SERVICES OF OTHER CARRIERS?**

A. Cricket will offer the supported services solely through its own facilities. We will use our existing AWS network infrastructure, which consists of antennae, cell sites, mobile switching offices, trunking, network equipment and interconnection arrangements with other carriers to provide the supported services in the wire centers where the company seeks designation. Cricket will not resell the services of other carriers.

**Q. HOW WILL CRICKET SATISFY THE REQUIREMENT THAT IT ADVERTISE THE AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORTED SERVICES?**

A. Cricket will use media of general distribution to advertise the availability of the supported services and the related charges as required by FCC rules. Cricket

1 understands that the Commission has found this requirement to be met where a  
2 commitment is given to using advertisements which disclose to potential subscribers the  
3 services available and the applicable charges, including the Lifeline and Link-up  
4 programs for qualifying customers. Cricket is committed to do the same, using  
5 television, radio, newspaper, direct mail, bill inserts, telephone directory and billboard  
6 advertising.

7 **Q. IS CRICKET COMMITTED TO PROVIDING SERVICE TO ALL CUSTOMERS**  
8 **MAKING A REASONABLE REQUEST FOR SERVICE IN THE PROPOSED**  
9 **DESIGNATION AREA?**

10 A. Yes. As is reflected in our application, Cricket has certified to the Commission our  
11 commitment to do so in accordance with Commission Regulation 103-690.C(1)(A).  
12 Thus, Cricket is committed to providing service on a timely basis to all customers in the  
13 proposed designation area and within our existing coverage area upon receipt of a  
14 reasonable request for service. For those customers within the proposed designation area  
15 who are outside of our existing coverage area, Cricket is committed to providing service  
16 within a reasonable period of time if service can be provided at a reasonable cost by (a)  
17 modifying or replacing the requesting customer's equipment, (b) deploying a roof  
18 mounted antenna or other equipment, (c) adjusting the nearest cell tower, (d) adjusting  
19 network or customer facilities, (e) reselling services from another carrier's facilities to  
20 provide service, or (f) employing, leasing or constructing an additional cell site, cell  
21 extender, repeater or other similar equipment.



1 **Q. HOW WILL CRICKET GO ABOUT IDENTIFYING, QUALIFYING AND**  
2 **ENROLLING ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS IN THE LIFELINE AND LINKUP**  
3 **PROGRAMS AS REQUIRED IN COMMISSION REGULATION**  
4 **103-690.C(1)(C)?**

5 A. Cricket plans to engage in the advertising and outreach program that is described in detail  
6 in Exhibit "C" to our application. Our current listings with the Office of Regulatory Staff  
7 and theUSAC will be continued and I have attached copies of these to my testimony as  
8 Exhibit JSB Direct Exhibit 2. Our USAC listing will be modified if the designation we  
9 seek in this proceeding is granted. In addition, we will modify our market web-site  
10 information to reflect the addition of the low-income designation areas requested in this  
11 proceeding to our current ETC area. Cricket will work with government agencies that  
12 administer the qualifying assistance programs and with social service agencies to ensure that  
13 they are aware Cricket is a Lifeline provider. Cricket will provide these agencies with  
14 collateral materials outlining the Lifeline program and how to obtain Lifeline discounts.  
15 Cricket plans to expand their community outreach program in the counties where ETC  
16 designation is being sought. Community events in the areas where potential Lifeline  
17 subscribers live will be planned. Direct mailing to the zip codes in the covered areas will  
18 also provide information on the availability of the Lifeline program. Lifeline materials will  
19 be available for non-English speaking consumers. Advertising will occur through some  
20 combination of media channels, radio, newspaper, magazine and other print advertisements,  
21 outdoor advertising, direct marketing, and the Internet. Cricket stores and dealers will be

1 furnished with promotional material visible to customers in the stores including posters and  
2 counter cards.

3 **Q. WILL CRICKET BE ABLE TO FUNCTION IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS?**

4 A. Yes. Cricket has the ability to remain functional in emergency situations as required by  
5 R. 103-690.C(2) in that its system features battery back-up power capability at each  
6 mobile switching center and cell site consisting of dedicated generators fueled by gas or  
7 diesel and multiple mobile gas/diesel generators for cell sites in each market, all of which  
8 do not require an external power source to remain functional and can function until such  
9 time as traffic can be re-routed or external power restored. We are capable of re-routing  
10 call traffic around damaged facilities through changing call routing and in certain areas,  
11 through deploying a cell on wheels ("COW"). Traffic spikes resulting from emergency  
12 situations can be managed by re-routing of calls, the priority of which is determined  
13 based on traffic, cell site location, and time of day considerations. Cricket is also able to  
14 take advantage of mobile command centers established by its switch vendors in the event  
15 of a total switch outage.

16 **Q. IS CRICKET COMMITTED TO COMPLYING WITH THE CELLULAR**  
17 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**  
18 **CONSUMER CODE FOR WIRELESS SERVICE AS CONTEMPLATED BY**  
19 **COMMISSION RULE 103-690.C(2)?**

20 A. Yes, we are.

21 **Q. COMMISSION RULE 103-690.C.3 REQUIRES THAT CRICKET**  
22 **DEMONSTRATE THAT IT OFFERS A LOCAL USAGE PLAN COMPARABLE**

**TO ONE OFFERED BY THE INCUMBENT LEC; HOW DOES CRICKET SATISFY THAT REQUIREMENT?**

A. As I have described above, Cricket satisfies this requirement by offering a \$30 per month wireless service plan which include unlimited local calling in extended local calling areas that reach beyond those of the ILECs in the proposed designation area. With the application of the \$13.50 monthly lifeline credit, these extended area calling plans offer an effective monthly rate of \$16.50. Add to that the fact that our lowest monthly plan now includes unlimited long distance and the convenience of mobility that landline local plans do not offer, we believe that it becomes clear that Cricket offers a comparable local usage plan.

**Q. YOU MENTIONED A \$13.50 MONTHLY LIFELINE CREDIT; WHAT MAKES UP THAT FIGURE?**

A. The \$13.50 credit Cricket will offer to eligible lifeline customers consists of the subscriber line charge of \$6.50, which is the full Tier 1 discount, and both the Tier 2 and Tier 3 discounts of \$1.75 each, for a total of \$10.00. Cricket will add to that a further discount of \$3.50. Thus, the total discount is \$13.50, which is the maximum discount that a South Carolina subscriber may receive. However, Cricket will only be recovering \$10 from USAC in support payments.

**Q. WHAT DISCOUNT WILL CRICKET BE OFFERING FOR LINK-UP?**

A. Cricket will offer a one-time 50% reduction in our activation fee

**Q. HAS CRICKET CERTIFIED ITS ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT IT MAY BE REQUIRED TO OFFER CUSTOMERS EQUAL ACCESS TO LONG DISTANCE**

1           **CARRIERS?**

2    A.    Yes. In the affidavit of its Senior Vice President attached as Exhibit "D" to the  
3           application, Cricket has acknowledged that, as an ETC, the FCC may require that we  
4           provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other eligible carrier is  
5           providing equal access within the service area.

6    **Q.    HAS CRICKET CERTIFIED THAT IT OFFERS OR WILL OFFER**  
7           **SUPPORTED SERVICES USING ITS OWN FACILITIES OR A COMBINATION**  
8           **OF ITS OWN FACILITIES AND RESALE OF ANOTHER CARRIER'S**  
9           **SERVICES?**

10   A.    Yes. In the affidavit of its Senior Vice President attached as Exhibit "D" to the  
11           application, Cricket certifies that it currently offers all of the services that are supported  
12           by the federal universal service support mechanisms using our own facilities.

13   **Q.    HAS CRICKET CERTIFIED THAT IT WILL ADVERTISE THE**  
14           **AVAILABILITY OF THESE SERVICES, INCLUDING LIFELINE AND THE**  
15           **APPLICABLE CHARGES, USING MEDIA OF GENERAL DISTRIBUTION?**

16   A.    Yes. In the affidavit of its Senior Vice President attached as Exhibit "D" to the  
17           application, Cricket certifies that it will advertise these services using media of general  
18           distribution.

19   **Q.    CRICKET STATES IN ITS APPLICATION THAT THE PUBLIC INTEREST**  
20           **WILL BE SERVED BY GRANTING THE REQUESTED DESIGNATION;**  
21           **WOULD YOU PLEASE ELABORATE ON THIS COMPONENT OF THE**  
22           **APPLICATION?**

1 A. Yes. Of course, Cricket believes that its application is consistent with public  
2 convenience and necessity inasmuch as communications services in general enhance  
3 convenience in day to day life and are necessary to consumers for any number of reasons.  
4 With respect to the public interest of designating Cricket as an ETC, a grant of the  
5 application will bring with it the benefit of increased consumer choice and the unique  
6 advantages of Cricket's service offerings to consumers. As to the latter, all of Cricket's  
7 service offerings include unlimited local calling in an extended local calling area and,  
8 with the advent of our new rate plans, unlimited long distance. The availability of  
9 unlimited local and long distance will serve customers in a low-income demographic who  
10 have high volumes of usage well. Thus, customers will have the benefit of reduced toll  
11 charges while communicating more frequently. The availability of \$13.50 in low income  
12 support – \$3.50 of which Cricket will not recover from USAC – will serve to make  
13 Cricket's service offering an even more affordable alternative to traditional land line  
14 service. And, given the mobility of wireless service, Cricket's service offerings create a  
15 choice not available for subscribers to land line service. Because the low-income support  
16 will be distributed on a per customer basis and is directly related to the price an eligible  
17 customer pays, all USAC reimbursements will necessarily be used to provide Lifeline  
18 and Link-up service to subscribers, thus promoting the services and their availability to  
19 low income users. This is the result that the federal USF fund was intended to achieve.  
20 These factors demonstrate that a grant of the designation will serve the public interest.

21 **Q. YOU MENTIONED THE FEDERAL USF; WILL CRICKET CONTRIBUTE TO**  
22 **THE SOUTH CAROLINA UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND?**

1 A. Yes. Cricket contributes now to the South Carolina USF for its previously approved ETC  
2 designated areas in this state and will continue to do so if the designation we seek in this  
3 proceeding is approved.

4 **Q. CRICKET HAS REQUESTED THAT THE COMMISSION WAIVE THE**  
5 **PORTION OF ITS REGULATION PROVIDING FOR A CREAM-SKIMMING**  
6 **ANALYSIS WHERE AN APPLICANT SEEKS DESIGNATION BELOW THE**  
7 **STUDY AREA OF A RURAL LEC; WOULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS**  
8 **ASPECT OF THE COMPANY'S APPLICATION?**

9 A. Yes. Cricket is seeking designation below the study area of four rural telephone  
10 companies, namely Palmetto Telephone Company, Windstream South Carolina, Rock  
11 Hill Telephone Company, and Lancaster Telephone, because the study areas for each of  
12 them include territory outside of the counties in which Crickets seeks designation. For  
13 Rock Hill Telephone Company, the portion of its study area not proposed to be included  
14 in Cricket's requested ETC designation area consists of its service area in Chester  
15 County. For Lancaster Telephone Company, the portion of its study area not proposed to  
16 be included in Cricket's requested ETC designation area consists of its  
17 Chester County service area and its Kershaw County service area. For Windstream,  
18 formerly known as Alltel, the portion of its study area not proposed to be included in  
19 Cricket's requested ETC designation area consists of its service area in Kershaw County.  
20 For Lancaster Telephone Company, the portion of its study area not proposed to be in  
21 Cricket's requested ETC designation area consists of its Chester County service area and  
22 its Kershaw County service area. For Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, the

1 portion of its study area not proposed to be in Cricket's requested ETC designation area,  
2 consist of its Bamberg County service area. Even though the Commission rule  
3 contemplates a cream-skimming analysis in this circumstance, we believe it is  
4 unnecessary and have asked that the Commission waive this portion of its rule.

5 **Q. WHY DOES CRICKET BELIEVE THE CREAM-SKIMMING ANALYSIS IS**  
6 **NOT NECESSARY?**

7 A. The primary reason for the Company's belief in this regard is that the application seeks  
8 only low-income support from the federal USF. Given the nature of this support – which  
9 is designed to reduce the initial cost of obtaining service through Link-up and the  
10 monthly cost of maintaining service through Lifeline – we think there is little to no  
11 likelihood that the designation would allow Cricket to engage in cream-skimming low  
12 cost service areas to the exclusion of high cost service areas. As was noted in our  
13 application, the FCC considered this situation in its decision issued *In the Matter of*  
14 *Virgin Mobile USA, L.P.*, and declined to engage in a cream-skimming analysis because  
15 the applicant there sought ETC designation for Lifeline support only and there was no  
16 distinction between rural and non-rural incumbent LECs in that scenario given the fact  
17 that low-income and high cost support are fundamentally different. As we also noted in  
18 our application, the purpose of a cream-skimming analysis is to alleviate concerns over a  
19 competitive ETC seeking to obtain a disproportionate share of high density wire centers  
20 in a rural LECs service area and thereby receive more support than the rural LECs  
21 average cost of service in the entire study area, thereby achieving a windfall that would  
22 harm the incumbent provider. In addition, I would note that no LEC, rural or otherwise,

1           has opposed Cricket's application. Cricket believes that these factors warrant the  
2           requested waiver.


3   **Q.    DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?**

4   **A.    Yes, it does.**



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## cell phone plans

This is a sample of some of the wireless cell phone plans currently offered by Cricket. To see pricing and availability in your area, please enter your zip code.

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<a href="#">individual plans</a>		<a href="#">family plans</a>	
<b>\$30 plan</b>	<b>\$40 plan</b>	<b>\$50 plan</b>	<b>\$60 plan</b>
<b>unlimited</b>	<b>unlimited</b>	<b>unlimited</b>	<b>unlimited</b>
nationwide talk	nationwide talk	nationwide talk	nationwide talk
long distance	long distance	long distance	long distance
	<b>plus</b> nationwide text	<b>plus</b> nationwide text	<b>plus</b> nationwide text
	<b>plus</b> caller ID	<b>plus</b> caller ID	<b>plus</b> caller ID
	<b>plus</b> picture messaging	<b>plus</b> picture messaging	<b>plus</b> picture messaging
	<b>plus</b> video messaging	<b>plus</b> video messaging	<b>plus</b> video messaging
	<b>plus</b> voicemail	<b>plus</b> voicemail	<b>plus</b> voicemail
	<b>plus</b> call waiting	<b>plus</b> call waiting	<b>plus</b> call waiting
	<b>plus</b> 3-way calling	<b>plus</b> 3-way calling	<b>plus</b> 3-way calling
	<b>plus</b> call forwarding	<b>plus</b> call forwarding	<b>plus</b> call forwarding
	<b>plus</b> 411	<b>plus</b> 411	<b>plus</b> 411
	<b>plus</b> mobile web	<b>plus</b> mobile web	<b>plus</b> mobile web
		<b>plus</b> international text	<b>plus</b> international text
		<b>plus</b> mobile email	<b>plus</b> mobile email
		<b>plus</b> data backup	<b>plus</b> data backup
		<b>plus</b> navigation (available 4/13)	<b>plus</b> navigation (available 4/13)
			<b>plus</b> mobile video entertainment
			<b>plus</b> roaming (100 min. included)

Plans may require activation fee or migration fee.

Whether you're looking for unlimited minutes all month long or an affordable prepaid option, Cricket offers a cell phone plan that's right for you. We invite you to compare our cell phone plans with those from other carriers. You'll find that even our cheapest cell phone plans offer unlimited talking and caller ID. And that's just the beginning. For a little more, you can get additional unlimited calling features like: long distance, voicemail, text/picture messaging, and mobile Web. If you don't use your phone every day, you might want to check out our prepaid cell phone plans. With Cricket PAYGo plans, you to get unlimited features for as a little as \$1.00 per day! And no matter what type of Cricket plan you choose, we've got a variety of brand name cell phones with tons of features and accessories to suit your lifestyle.

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> **LIFELINE AND LINK-UP COMPANIES**

**Lifeline and Link-up Companies in South Carolina**

- **ALLTEL**  
1-866-255-8356
- **AT&T**  
1-888-757-6500
- **Bluffton Telephone Company**  
1-800-726-1266
- **Chesnee Telephone Company**  
864-461-2211
- **Chester Telephone Company**  
1-800-768-1212
- **Cricket Telephone Company**  
704-504-2729
- **Farmers Telephone Cooperative**  
1-888-218-5050
- **Fort Mill Telephone Company**  
803-324-9011
- **Hargray Telephone Company**  
1-800-726-1266
- **Home Telephone Company**  
843-761-9101
- **Horry Telephone Cooperative**  
1-800-824-0779
- **Lancaster Telephone Company**  
803-283-9011
- **Lockhart Telephone Company**  
1-800-768-1212
- **McClellanville Telephone Company**  
843-887-3201
- **Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative**  
843-538-2020
- **PBT Telecom**  
1-800-258-7978
- **Piedmont Rural Telephone Cooperative**  
864-682-3131
- **Rock Hill Telephone Company**  
803-324-9011
- **Ridgeway Telephone Company**  
1-800-768-1212
- **Sandhill Telephone Cooperative**  
843-658-3434
- **Sprint**  
1-888-723-8010
- **St. Stephen Telephone Company**  
843-567-3111
- **Verizon**  
1-800-483-4000
- **West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative**  
1-864-446-2111

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**Consumer Services**  
Resolve Disputes  
Settle Inquiries  
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**1-800-922-1531** (toll-free)  
**803-737-5230**  
(Columbia, SC)

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**Lifeline/Linkup**  
Offering assistance to qualified residential telephone customers  
  
**1-866-788-6565**  
(toll-free)  
  
**803-737-5234**  
(Columbia, SC)

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**Telecom Service For The Hearing & Speech Impaired**

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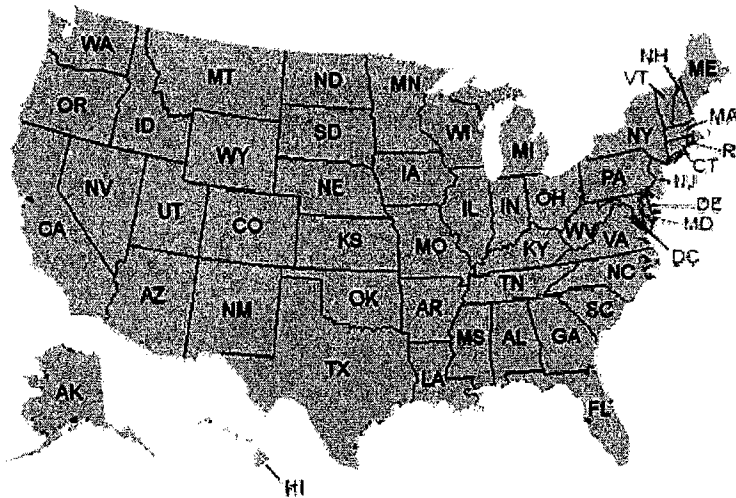
**Contact Us**  
Driving Directions to the ORS, Contact Information, and Staff Directory

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## Telephone Assistance Programs for Low Income Households

**Lifeline, Link Up, and Toll Limitation Service (TLS)** help keep Americans connected by making basic, local telephone service more affordable for more than 7 million Americans. For information about applying for these discounts, click on your state in the map below or contact your phone company directly. Please note, not all companies that offer Lifeline, Link Up, and TLS are listed.



Or select a state from the list: Choose a state

### Low Income Households

Individuals can use this website to determine whether or not they may be eligible to receive Lifeline, Link Up, and TLS support. By locating information listed under the state in which they live and the telephone company that serves their area, consumers can determine the amount of discount for which they may qualify. Eligible individuals must sign up for Lifeline, Link Up, and TLS through their local telephone company or in some states through a designated administrator of the program. This website provides specific contact information for many of the telephone companies that offer these discounts.

QUESTIONS FROM CONSUMERS - [E-mail USAC](#)

### Eligible Telecommunication Carriers

All eligible telecommunications carriers (ETC) are required to advertise the availability of the Lifeline and Link Up programs in a manner reasonably designed to reach eligible households within its study area. As part of an outreach strategy, ETCs are encouraged to post their company's information regarding the low income discount programs as well as eligibility and application processes on [www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org). Please note that if you choose to post the availability of Lifeline and Link Up in on the internet, it must be part of a broader outreach plan that does not rely solely on the internet, bill inserts, hotlines, or phone book advertisements. For more information about the FCC's outreach requirements please see USAC's [FCC Outreach Guidelines](#) page.

POST YOUR COMPANY – [Lifeline Support Postings](#)

QUESTIONS FROM CARRIERS – [E-mail USAC](#)

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is responsible for maintaining the information posted on this website, which was created by local telephone companies and the United States Telecommunications Association. USAC continues to develop this site in order to make it a valuable resource for consumers. Additional information about the [Lifeline](#) and [Link Up](#) programs can be found on [USAC's Low Income](#) page.

Last modified on 9/28/2009

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## Telephone Assistance Programs for Low Income Households

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*Selected state:*

South Carolina

*Please select your local phone company from the list below.*

*(Not all phone companies are listed. Please call your local phone company for more information if they are not listed here.)*

Cricket Communications



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## Telephone Assistance Programs for Low Income Households

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Selected state:

South Carolina

Please select your local phone company from the list below.

(Not all phone companies are listed. Please call your local phone company for more information if they are not listed here.)

Cricket Communications

## Lifeline and Link Up Information for Cricket Communications Customers in South Carolina

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### Wireless Service

**Lifeline** is a government program that offers qualified low income households a discount on their monthly local telephone bill. Each state has its own guidelines to qualify. The application and qualification process differs by state and sometimes by individual phone company.

- **How much can I save?**

You will save up to \$13.50 on your basic monthly bill. These benefits apply to your local telephone service charges that you purchase. These benefits will also cover your subscriber line charge.

- **How do I know if I am eligible?**

Program based eligibility:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Additional eligibility criteria may apply to residents of federally recognized tribal lands

Income based eligibility:

- Eligibility based on Program Participation only.

- **Are there any restrictions?**

Lifeline can only be used for the primary telephone line in a household. You may purchase additional services available to a non-Lifeline customer. The name on the phone bill must match the name of the household member participating on the eligible program.

- **How do I apply?**

To apply for Lifeline stop by your nearest certified Cricket Communications retail store. You may find more information about Lifeline and other telephone services available from Cricket Communications at <http://www.mycricket.com/savannah>. An application can be obtained online, or at a certified Cricket Communications retail store.

- **What proof of eligibility do I need to provide?**

You will be asked for proof of your eligibility by submitting a form signed under penalty of perjury that you receive benefits from or a copy of any dated document which verifies your participation in one of the qualifying programs listed above. Proof of total household income may be required for income based qualification. Your Lifeline benefits will take effect when proof of eligibility is received.

- **How do I continue to receive Lifeline benefits?**

Eligibility is reviewed periodically. Your benefits will be discontinued when you no longer meet the eligibility requirements or when proof of eligibility is not received. Customers who are no longer eligible for Lifeline benefits must notify their service provider.

- **Other Useful information**

There are other options that can help you save money, including free toll blocking, waived deposit with toll blocking and voluntary limit on long distance calling (toll control).

**Link Up** helps households reduce the cost of initiating telephone service. This program pays some of the cost of connecting local telephone service to your home or activating wireless phone service. However, Link Up does not cover the cost of wiring inside your home.

- **How much will I save?**

Link Up will pay 50% of your installation charges for total discount of \$7.50. (Maximum benefit \$30.00) An additional discount may apply to residents of federally recognized tribal lands.

- **How do I know if I am eligible?**

If you qualify for Lifeline, you also qualify for Link Up.

- **Are there any restrictions?**

Link Up can only be used for the charges for activating a primary telephone line or moving existing service to a new address. Charges related to wiring and telephone jacks within your home and wireless handsets are not eligible for the Link Up discount.

- **How do I apply?**

To apply for Link Up you will follow the same application process as Lifeline and the same proof of eligibility as Lifeline.

**Being a Lifeline or Link Up customer does not protect you from being disconnected if you fail to pay your telephone bill.**

**Lifeline and Link Up discounts cannot be applied to an outstanding balance owed to your phone company.**

**Lifeline can only be applied to one wireless OR wireline telephone per household.**

Permanent link to this posting:

[Click here to access this page directly.](#)

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